



September 2003 Update

Legacy Project Tops Summer with “Summit”

After 9 regional workshops, 2,357 invitees, 5,100 miles, 97 maps, and one digital atlas, the California Legacy Project reached its first summit this past July as it wrapped up a major outreach effort.

To commemorate a year-long series of regional meetings, the Project hosted [a half-day session](#) in Sacramento to illuminate some preliminary results from this extensive outreach and information exchange effort. The event attracted more than 100 attendees from around the state, and featured remarks by Resources Secretary Mary Nichols, former Assembly-member Virginia Strom-Martin, who helped initiate the Legacy Project in 1999, and Jack Dangermond, founder of the highly regarded geographic information system software company, *ESRI*.

The event showcased the gallery of Legacy maps developed during the past year, and recognized those state agencies and departments whose data helped form the basis of the spatial information. It also offered some hands-on training with the Project's premiere information tool, the California Digital Conservation Atlas.



Attendees at the Legacy Project's Summit meeting view its state and regional mapping effort.

Assistant Resources Secretary Madelyn Glickfeld, director of the Legacy Project, reminded attendees that the Legacy effort was designed to look strategically across landscapes and jurisdictions to ensure that the state's conservation investments will meet the long terms needs of a diverse state like California.

She highlighted how much data was collected at the workshops, including considerable information on current, locally-based conservation planning efforts. The information on locations, contacts and types of conservation projects is now digitized and available through the California Digital Conservation Atlas.

Conservation Factors

Glickfeld also unveiled some of the [preliminary results](#) gathered at the workshops and noted how they will help answer questions that the Legacy Project was designed to address. As an example, one of the tasks at each Legacy workshop was to identify conservation factors (“criteria”) that can help guide the state's conservation investments in habitat, recreation, and working landscapes.

Although this was not a consensus process, we ranked, summarized and compared the views of participants. Such information can be very useful in helping validate and inform existing decision-making, while also serving to identify important data gaps.

As an example, for [terrestrial biodiversity](#), workshop participants revealed a good deal of commonality between regions. Similarly, aquatic biodiversity underscored common regional interests in such things as water quality, quantity, and flow regimes, as well as the importance of habitat linkages.

Conservation Strategies

Other workshop results identified by small group sessions include some specific conservation *strategies* that use approaches that address both local resource conservation and local economic needs.

The nine workshops produced literally hundreds of these potential “win-win” strategies. Again, while this was not a consensus process, it produced a good deal of discussion about efforts that are working, could be improved, or should be implemented. Examples included the following:

- Conserve more private working lands by improving the use of existing tax incentives;
- Increase regulatory flexibility for private landowners that carry out ‘best management practices’ or restoration;
- Support ecotourism and agricultural tourism to help generate sustainable rural income;
- Continue to use and improve conservation easements.

Legacy also found some strategies unique to particular regions:

- Create information clearinghouse for grant applicants (North Coast)
- Provide incentives for water re-use on farms (Central Valley)
- Coordinate conservation planning around military lands (South Coast)
- Indemnify landowners who provide recreational access on easement lands from liability (Bay Area)

In addition to the information and data generated at the workshops, Glickfeld also noted that a recurring workshop theme was that participants wanted to increase regional collaboration and capacity-building, and customize strategic conservation planning to fit the particular needs of different regions. After all, as the Project learned in its statewide outreach effort, “one size doesn’t fit all.” Each region does indeed have a unique set of needs, opportunities, and potential.

Next Steps for the Legacy Project

With the workshop results as a building block, the Project is sharing these regional workshop ideas with decision-making entities. It also is moving ahead with some new data development, which is based on the high priority criteria identified at regional meetings. This information can enhance analytical tools such as Legacy’s Digital Conservation Atlas.

Legacy staff is currently conducting Atlas orientation and training sessions for state departments. They are also doing selected presentations at workshops and conferences. For the coming year, the Legacy work plan is also geared toward improving our biodiversity indicators and developing new maps based on

better resource data. In addition, two new analytical software tools are under consideration: One would help identify areas for conservation investment by using a specific set of criteria to locate places with the highest resource value. The other would allow users to compare one project area with another, and then place it within an ecosystem or watershed context.

Legacy is also working with a variety of departments to develop and implement working lands stewardship opportunities and urban open space strategies.

This is an ambitious work plan, but one well positioned to accomplish the goals of this six-year project, which are to improve the state’s conservation investments and help support local and regional efforts.



The Legacy Project’s Environmental Programs Manager, Rainer Hoenicke, shows some of the key elements of the Digital Conservation Atlas to attendees at the Legacy Summit.

For More Information

The information packet from the Summit is now available on the Legacy website, along with a variety of other material. You can view or download them at legacy.ca.gov. Later this year, a summary document about the Legacy workshops will be available. This publication, along with individual workshop reports and extensive data from each of the regional gatherings, also can be found on the Legacy website. For any additional information, please contact Charlie Casey at (916) 651-7590 or charlie.casey@resources.ca.gov.